



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF **ENERGY**

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Office of River Protection Awards \$3 Million Recovery Act Contract to Local Small Business

(RICHLAND, Wash.) – A \$3 million contract to construct an interim moisture barrier at a Hanford tank farm has been awarded by Washington River Protection Solutions (WRPS), a prime contractor for the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of River Protection (ORP), to a general construction firm in Richland, Wash. The work, scheduled to begin in March, is funded with money provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Hanford is home to 177 aging underground waste storage tanks. A number of the older single-shell tanks have leaked as much as one million gallons of waste into the surrounding soil. The asphalt barrier is being built at a tank farm near the center of the 586 square-mile Hanford Site and will prevent precipitation from seeping into the soil and pushing contaminants deeper underground.

"We're excited to move forward with this important project because it not only gives a boost to a local, small business, it is the right thing to do for the environment," said project manager Dan Parker.

Precipitation collected on the barrier will be directed to an evaporation basin just outside the farm. The basin will be lined with material to prevent it from leaking. Then the basin will be covered with soil and planted with native grasses to drink up the moisture.

This is the second such barrier to be built at a Hanford tank farm, with up to six of them planned. The barriers are interim measures that will remain in place until a final decision is made on cleaning up the contaminants that are in the soil around and beneath the tanks.

The ORP is using \$326 million in Recovery Act funds at Hanford to create jobs and career opportunities, upgrade tank farm infrastructure, extend the life of nuclear operating facilities critical to waste cleanup, and prepare for waste vitrification and disposal. Under the ORP's direction, WRPS has awarded more than \$80 million in Recovery Act-funded contracts to date with 77 percent of funds going to small businesses.

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